

Board of Fire Commissioners  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 4, 2024

Present: Commissioner Longo, Commissioner Dutton, Commissioner Bemer,  
Commissioner Cafazzo, Commissioner Cavanaugh and Commissioner Cofiell

Absent: None

Others: Chief Michael Thurz, Assistant Chief David Thurz, Deputy Chief Motowidlak  
and Deputy Chief Cody

Commissioner Longo called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

**Approval of Minutes:**

Commissioner Longo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November meeting. Commissioner Cofiell made the motion to approve, which was seconded by Commissioner Dutton. There was no discussion. The motion passed with abstentions from Commissioners Bemer and Cavanaugh.

Commissioner Longo asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December minutes. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Bemer, and seconded by Commissioner Cofiell. Commissioner Cofiell noted there was a scrivener's error with the date for the next meeting in January. The minutes reflected January 5<sup>th</sup>, when it should have been January 4<sup>th</sup>. The motion passed with abstentions from Commissioners Cafazzo and Dutton.

**Chief's Report:**

Chief Thurz reported the following:

- Contractor doing the renovations at Stations 3 and 4 anticipates to be completed by January 19<sup>th</sup>. There could be one or two items that remain open. In addition, Facilities has a list of items that need to be completed as well.
- Station 4's hallway, Captain's office and apparatus bay is being repainted. Once Station 4 is completed the painter will move over to Station 3. Station 3's apparatus bay will not be repainted until the ceiling work is completed.
- The installation of the generator at Station 2 is nearing completion. The contractor will also remove the old generator.
- Commissioner Longo inquired if the painter is with the same group of contractors that did the renovation work or was it a different contractor? Chief Thurz replied the painter is not associated with the general contractor; it is a firm on retainer with the town.
- Contractor for the training facility is tentatively scheduled to start the week of January 22<sup>nd</sup>. The contractor is Al Rose Construction from North Branford, and one of the preferred vendors recommended by Fire Facilities.

- Wethersfield Fire Department has contracted to host a lifting and stabilization class, and have requested the use of our facility based on the training props we maintain. Wethersfield has offered four free seats for our members to participate in the training.
- South Windsor Fire Department is looking to utilize our training facility as part of their Rescue Weekend program. In exchange Glastonbury members are invited to attend an evening lecture titled “Leadership and Lessons from a Senior Man”, presented by Al Benjamin retired FDNY on April 13<sup>th</sup> for free.
- Commission members were provided with a copy of the department’s third quarter report, which was also provided to the Town Manager for the Town Council. The report illustrated the department’s statistics from July 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>, with a comparison between 2022 and 2023.
- Five probationary members are nearing the completion of their Firefighter I training. Four members recently completed their practical and written exams, with the fifth member scheduled to take the practical examination this weekend.
- Last month Commissioner Bemer inquired about the grant application and if there was a reason for being denied? Chief Thurz recently learned the denial was based on the age of the radios (15 years old), not being old enough to pass through computer scoring and advancing to peer review. Chief Thurz was given some pointers in how to reapply for portable radios with the upcoming grant process.
- Commissioner Longo asked if 15 years is not old enough, what is considered the appropriate age? Chief Thurz explained that \$324 million is allocated to the program. FEMA received 7,000 applications totaling \$2.4 billion. Based on the number of applications received, departments with radios older than 15 years would be a priority. Our department is categorized as suburban, and the suggestion from the FEMA representative was to consider applying as rural organization based on the land mass to population.
- Starting January 1<sup>st</sup> fire departments in the Connecticut will be required to pay an annual \$10.00 fee for each firefighter as a part of supplementing the cancer bill. However, the State of Connecticut has yet to figure out how to bill departments for this fee.
- Commissioner Cofiell inquired if the annual fee will be used to fund the cancer relief bill? Chief Thurz replied no, it is to supplement what has already been funded. The annual fee will be deposited into an investment fund. Furthermore, claims will follow the worker’s compensation process, but will not be considered a worker’s compensation claim. Worker’s compensation will be reimbursed through the cancer relief fund. The process is still somewhat complicated, but remains a work in progress at the state level.
- The Capital Improvement Program workshop is scheduled for January 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Some adjustments have been made, but were minimal. The change reflects the cost of fire apparatus being split over two budget cycles. In the upcoming year \$500K is being proposed as a deposit for a cab and chassis with the balance of \$740K funded in 2026. Also included in 2026 is a proposed deposit for a second engine tanker followed by the

balance paid in 2027. The deposit for a ladder truck is factored into 2027 with the balance funded in 2028.

- Commissioner Dutton inquired if the process has changed with the new Town Manager? Chief Thurz replied yes, capital improvement workshop and operating presentations were one-night events. This year's capital improvement is scheduled for two nights, and operating is possibly going to be three-nights.
- Review of operating expenses.
- Commissioner Longo inquired about the new member who left the fire department quickly into their probationary period, and how much money was spent on the individual? Chief Thurz responded the department invested in a physical and purchased a new pair of gloves because the size required was not in stock. The department did not purchase any personal protective equipment, but borrowed a pair of boots and pants from another department. The individual had not started any firefighting classes. The department spent approximately \$695.00 on the individual.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Nominating Committee Recommendations**

- Commissioner Cafazzo proposed the following slate of officers for the next two years:
  - Charles Longo – Chairman
  - James Dutton - Vice-Chairman
  - Steven Bemer - Secretary.

Commissioner Cofiehl made the motion to accept Commissioner Cafazzo's nominations, which was seconded by Commissioner Bemer. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **New Business:**

- None

### **Committee Report:**

#### **Strategic Planning Committee:**

- There was no meeting in December. The next meeting will take place on January 22, 2024, Station Two at 7 PM.
- Commissioner Longo mentioned there was not a recent budget review meeting, but Chief Thurz did have a conversation with Commissioner Cavanaugh. Chief Thurz noted there was nothing pressing that needed to be discussed prior to the Commission meeting. Chief Thurz did inform Commissioner Longo prior to the meeting that the \$65K for a department study, which was recommended by the Strategic Planning Committee, had been eliminated from the operating budget.

- Commissioner Cofiell inquired if this was the only item that the Town Manager had removed from the budget? Chief Thurz replied the Town Manager is currently focused on the Capital Improvement Program since it is taking place in January, with the operating budget to be reviewed in February.
- Commissioner Longo asked for an overview on how the Sourcewell contract works? Chief Thurz described the process, noting that options or add-ons technically could not exceed 25% of the overall established price for the vehicle. Commissioner Longo asked if it would speed up the ordering process? Chief Thurz replied yes as it eliminates some of the steps in the bidding process.

**Next Regular Meeting:** February 1, 2024 at Company 1, 2825 Main Street, 6:30 PM.

**Meeting Adjourned:** Commissioner Cavanaugh made the motion for adjournment, which was seconded by Commissioner Cofiell, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.



Deborah Torres  
Recording Secretary

c: Fire Commission (6)  
Fire Chiefs (4)  
Fire Captains (4)  
Jonathan Luiz, Town Manager  
Michael Makuch, Fire Marshal  
Gina Consiglio, Purchasing Agent